MONTEREY NEWS

March 2006
VOLUME XXXVI · Number 3

The Town

Highway Department

Providing preliminary figures for the 2006–2007 town budget was a major priority for all municipal departments in February. Director of Operations Maynard Forbes told the Select Board that the Highway Department's budget request will include funds for a new employee, a position advocated by the public for several years and made more immediate with the myriad duties added to the Highway Department's purview. Forbes wrote a job description for the proposed position that will be presented to the Select Board. The Select Board wants to insure that Forbes does not have to put in so many hours in the future, but that will mean that the new position must be in the managerial category.

Budget items for the Highway Department will include a new vehicle at a cost of $7,000 more than if it had been replaced last year, when it was deferred due to budgetary constraints; a federally mandated salt shed; street signs for private roads; and salary increases. As of mid-February, no provision had been made for dam repair, which has been estimated at $400,000.

Forbes reported that he would like to switch to biodiesel fuel. Although biodiesel now costs the same as regular diesel, no company has begun to deliver it, rendering its use for the Highway Department moot.

Robert Martin of Sheffield holds a 15lb. 6 oz. northern pike he caught ice fishing on Lake Buel in Monterey Sunday, Feb. 19. The 35-inch fish was released back into the lake. Catch and release is a common practice used by Berkshire ice fishermen so they can catch fish on another day. (Photo by Stephen Rose.)

Select Board chair Michèle Miller asked Forbes for a clarification on "brush dumps." Town Secretary Melissa Noe will ask the Conservation Commission if the town can get permission to clear the fallen trees from Rawson Brook, and bill the landowners for the work.

Forbes has two quotes on a furnace for Bally Gally (the second house on the Edith Wilson property bequeathed to the town), one for $10,000, and one for $8,900, and is waiting for a third bid. Currently the bill for heating the house electrically is $400 per month. Select Board member Jonathan Sylbert told the Select Board that to make Bally Gally into legally approved affordable housing there must be a lottery of people who qualify and want to rent it. Sylbert will head up the effort to establish such a lottery.

Forbes has been meeting with contractor Mark Amstead to finish the detail work on Town Hall.

Town Accountant Barbara Gauthier asked the Select Board to declare a "winter emergency" so she can continue to pay for winter road maintenance.

Police Department

Police Chief Gareth Backhaus is guiding the town through the NIMS (National Incident Management Systems) process. After some initial confusion about who in Monterey needs to receive NIMS training, it was announced that many people not usually thought of as "first responders" can take the required course and subsequent test online. Sylbert will contact the regional MEMA representative to do the requisite training.

Fire Chief Ray Tryon reported that fifteen of the Fire Company members would like to continue their NIMS training. He once again warned the Select Board that Monterey will lose all state funding unless all of the appropriate elected officials take the necessary training.

The COPS (Community Oriented Policing) grant that had been paying a portion of the salary for a full-time police officer for the past three years has run out. The 2006–2007 budget must include provision for the full salary, increasing the department's budget request because the grant's terms stated that if the town eliminated the position immediately when the grant had run its course, the town would have to repay the grant in full.

When asked about his department's budget, Backhaus said that he understands that Monterey has 800 homes on 1300 building lots, adding up to more than $500 million in appraised real estate, a figure high enough to provide the level of police protection currently enjoyed by the residents.

Backhaus reported a mistaken theft, a complaint about the larceny of a motorcycle, an abandoned 911 call at Gould Farm. A routine ticketing of a motor vehicle led to a return visit to town by the irate motorist. After a call from the Great Barrington Police Department on January 30, an arrest was made of an individual with an outstanding warrant in Monterey. There were three car break-ins in which the cars were rifled. The police investigated a domestic disturbance on Beartown Mountain Road and an abandoned 911 call at Benedict Pond. The police assisted the Fire Department with a medical call at Gould Farm. There were three false alarms, two of them on Wellman Road and one on Corashire, a lockout on Tyringham Road, and a disabled motor vehicle on Pixley Road.

The Police Department's second cruiser was retired because its front end had completely rusted out. Richard Jaffe, owner of Richard Chevrolet in Cheshire, Connecticut, and a second-home owner in Monterey, donated a 2002 Chevrolet

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Trailblazer to the Police Department, the first 4-wheel drive in Police Department history. Backhaus will try to sell the retired car's engine to a fire department.

The Firearms Records Bureau installed a MIRCS (loosely translated as the Massachusetts Instant Record Check System) to speed the gun permit process.

Backhaus reported that MEMA is adding a frequency to the fire tower on Mt. Wilcox. The added frequency is required by the federal government so that all state people can consult on the same frequency.

Fire Department

It was reported that each false fire alarm costs the town an average of $320, depending on the number of firefighters who show up. Current town law calls for a $100 fine for the first false alarm, and $200 for the second one, rates considered "reasonable," given what it costs the town. Fire Chief Ray Tryon reminded the Select Board that homeowners are responsible for maintaining their fire alarms in working order.

Tryon called attention to a new state law that requires carbon monoxide detectors in homes. The alarm must be installed within 10 feet of bedroom doors, and must be installed on every habitable floor of living space. Although all citizens should install them, they are mandatory when there is a resale or improvements to a home. Moreover, landlords must install them. The Select Board voted to approve $25 for the fee and inspection of carbon monoxide detectors, and the same for smoke detectors.

Michael Storch

Kenn Basler, proprietor of Monterey General Store, explaining something or other.

In a discussion about the Fire Department's upcoming budget request, Select Board member Michael Storch asked Tryon about the $5,000 allotted to the Fire Department for firefighter expenses. Tryon said that in 1982 the town had voted for these funds so firefighters could replace clothing items damaged in the line of duty. After the new fire station was built, the fire fighters voted to allocate the $5,000 to help pay off the building's mortgage. Now that the mortgage is retired, the Fire Department uses this annual $5,000 transfer of town funds for building expenses, such as utilities. Hearing this explanation of the transformation of funds for clothing damaged in fires to funds to pay operating expenses, Storch suggested that the Fire Department relinquish its claim on the $5,000. Tryon rejected the suggestion.

Building Commissioner

Town residents Bill Johnson, Kenn Basler, Dan Moriarty, and Brian Puntin were appointed to the newly formed Monterey Building Commissioner Committee, charged with learning how this office works and what it requires for appropriate financial resources. Members of the Select Board and the committee agreed that such a study will transcend the persistent personality issues that have plagued this position for several years, and look instead at the realistic needs of the town in a time of rapid development pressures.

The new committee plans to appraise the level of service by interviewing contractors, homeowners, the building inspector himself, other building inspectors, and Gordon Bailey, the state building inspector for Berkshire County. Committee Chair Johnson said they would like to get information on five "typical" homeowners and five builders to begin to understand the permitting process. Miller reminded the committee that, in addition to the formal permitting procedures, the Building Commissioner also has to pursue cases where work is underway or has been

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completed without a permit. Johnson said that he would supply the Select Board with minutes of his committee's meetings.

Building Commissioner Don Torrico was told of the need for access to his department's records so the committee could work on its analysis. The committee was assured that it would have access to whatever records it needs. They anticipate making an interim report in mid-March.

Town Counsel

Town Counsel Jerry Scully requested an adjustment in his compensation, primarily because of the inordinate number of hours he had to spend on one building permit case. Miller said the Select Board planned to request an increase in his stipend, noting that the Select Board appreciates both his availability and sound advice.

Scully said that all members of any town board or commission that is working on a quasi-judicial situation, such as a special permit, must have the same information. If one board or committee member in this situation seeks the advice of a town official, the information reaches the committee filtered through that person, which is in contravention of accepted legal procedures.

Scully reported that under Massachusetts General Law, direct deposits for town employees must be approved at town meeting. Currently there is a question of whether the Town Treasurer is obligated to administer direct deposits, should the residents approve them at town meeting.

Town Hall

Sylbert informed Town Clerk Barbara Swann that actions taken by Melissa Noe, Town Secretary, are at the behest of the Select Board, and should be treated as such by all town officials and residents.

Monterey is required to hire a private contractor for beaver control, but because Monterey lacks a local licensed person with the appropriate insurance, Noe was asked to request a list from the state of licensed and insured beaver control people who live in this general area.

Noe announced that on March 22 at 1:00 p.m. Mike Cahill from the state Department of Agricultural Resources will address the Select Board and town employees about the duties of an animal inspector, the removal of dead animals, and rabid animals. The Board of Health is hosting the meeting, and has invited the Police and Highway Departments and Boards of Health of surrounding towns to attend the meeting.

The Select Board decided that the quarterly informational meeting on the evening of March 20 will concern Prop 2½. Sylbert and Town Accountant Barbara Gauthier will lead the discussion.

Gauthier said she has been notified by the state that Monterey will receive $84,000 more in state aid than it did last year. She signed a contract with the Harris Computer Companny, which provides non-proprietary software.

Janet Cathcart will address the Select Board on February 27 about the Lake Garfield drawdown proposal.

Tree Warden Roger Tryon asked the Select Board about the study on Fairview Road. Miller told him that the April 10th evening meeting of the Select Board will be devoted to Fairview Road.

Finance Committee

Finance Committee member Debra Mielke noted that the mailing lists of the Town Clerk, the Assessors, and the Tax Collector are all slightly different. She suggested that since the Assessors' list is the most accurate, other town lists should conform to it.

Mielke observed that the town telephone bills demonstrate the inconsistencies of the town's phone system. She requested a breakout by department for the phone bills.

Tree Warden

A public hearing on changing the office of Tree Warden from an elected

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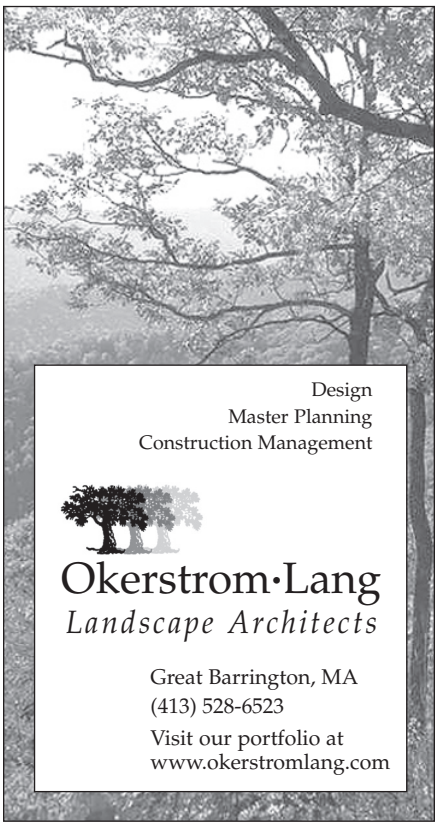

official to an appointed one was held at 11:00 a.m. on Monday, January 30. At the outset, it was noted that over time the Tree Warden's position has vacillated between elected and appointed. The Select Board believes that the Tree Warden should be a paid position so that the officer is accountable to the Select Board. Objections to this proposal were based on objections to "taking the will of the people away and putting it in the hands of the Select Board." The opponents also like the idea that a town resident serves as Tree Warden.

The lack of clarity about the job requirements of the Tree Warden is problematic. At a subsequent meeting, Town Accountant Barbara Gauthier said that until 2003, Tree Warden's budget was in the range of $7,000. After 2003, the budget was reduced to $1,000, with the remaining $6,000 appropriated to the Highway Department for tree removal. The $1,000 currently allotted to the Tree Warden pays for the purchase and planting of trees.

Miller pointed out that the Tree Warden receives no salary, rendering the job a volunteer position. In her view, this makes it difficult for the Tree Warden to be proactive, particularly with maintenance.

Dean Amidon asked what duties for the Tree Warden are listed in Massachusetts General Law. Tree Warden Roger Tryon replied that he is in charge of the health of trees on town property within town boundaries and is to offer opinions on the removal of trees on town property. In 2005, he said that he planted twenty-four trees along roadways, and spent time planting, staking, mulching, and watering them.

Sylbert expressed hope that a long-term plan would emerge about how the town should look, and how best to deal with public byways, the beach, and the parks. He suggested that reviewing the job description of the Tree Warden would help people understand the job. He also suggested that the Tree Warden have a budget large enough to consult with an arborist, if necessary, and to adequately maintain the trees in the parks and at the beach. Miller said that she believes the Select Board cannot require elected officials to give them detailed plans on how they intend to spend money. The consensus from the public hearing is that the Tree Warden needs a larger budget to do a more effective job.

This and That

National Grid representative Don Nutting requested the relocation of a damaged pole behind a stone ledge on New Marlborough Road where it intersects with Gould Road. The abutters agree with the request, which was approved.

Richard Tryon addressed the Select Board about a letter they sent him regarding the logs in Rawson Brook where it runs through his property. He disputes the Select Board's contention that it is his responsibility to remove the logs, on the premise that he does not own the water; nor can it be proven that the trees came from his property. He cited a statute that gives the Corps of Engineers authority on all navigable waters or streams that lead to navigable water. Rawson Brook flows into the Konkapot, which flows into the Housatonic, which flows through Connecticut to Long Island Sound, and thus, in his view, the Corps of Engineers controls Rawson Brook. Moreover, Tryon said that the Conservation Commission is the appropriate body to oversee log removal, and, given the potential navigability of Rawson Brook, the trees are the town's liability.

The Select Board pointed out that it would be moving into difficult territory if the town became responsible for maintaining private property. Sylbert asked Tryon if he really wants a policy that requires taxpayers to pay for problems on private property and reminded him that the town has an obligation to protect itself if a situation on private property can lead to liability for the entire town.

Planning Board Chair Maggie Leonard reported to the Select Board that Rob Hoogs had advised the Board on what it needs to do to complete a master plan for the town. She also solved the problem of the Board's missing minutes—they had been removed from Town Hall so she could write the Planning Board section of the annual Town Report.

Correction

In the February *Monterey News* Town report, the sentence "The Select Board will appropriate $6,240 from free cash to the Building Commissioner's account ..." should have read "The Select Board has requested the transfer of $6,240 from free cash to the Building Commissioner's account...."

— Laurily Epstein

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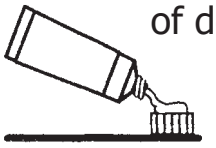

528-6520

Route 23 Monterey

Planning Board News

The Planning Board held its regular monthly meetings in February on the second and fourth Thursdays, the 9th and 23rd. On February 9th Select Board Chair Michèle Miller visited the Planning Board for what she characterized as a courtesy call. Miller wanted to correct and clarify several issues, and what she believed to be miscommunications between the Select Board and the Planning Board. The first item was to clarify the issue about the source of the $6500 that the Planning Board received and used to consult with Joel Russell, a lawyer who specializes in land-use planning and has worked with several local towns in that capacity. Miller recounted how in 2000 then Governor Cellucci made funds available for towns to produce a Community Development Plan, and that the Select Board did secure those funds. In an article in the February *Monterey News,* Planning Board chair Maggie Leonard stated that a Planning Board member had applied for, and been granted, those funds. After clarifying these facts Miller expressed appreciation that the Master Plan is on the front burner for the Planning Board.

Miller also wanted to have a conversation about a letter from Town Counsel in response to a disagreement between Planning Board member Janet Cathcart and the Select Board regarding her right to meet informally with the Building Inspector on Planning Board matters. To wit: Cathcart requested a meeting with the Building Inspector; the Building Inspector and the Select Board decided that there was a possibility that this might violate the open meeting law; the meeting was cancelled; Town Counsel Jerome Scully was asked his opinion. Scully issued a letter in which he made points that led each party to believe they had been correct. In discussion with the Planning Board, Miller explained that from the view of the Select Board any discussion with the Building Inspector is best conducted with the whole Planning Board during a posted meeting. Additionally, in an earlier discussion on the same subject, the Select Board stated that the Building Inspector should be compensated for those meetings with monies from the Planning Board budget. Miller noted that Town Counsel pointed out that quasi-judicial boards are not to gather information independently. Planning Board member Janet Cathcart acknowledged the correctness of that assertion and countered that the letter from Town Counsel also stated that "Nothing in Section 23B prohibits an individual member from having a discussion with anyone regarding general matters or Planning Board issues." A violation of the Open Meeting Law would occur if the Planning Board were the special permit granting authority in Monterey, which it is not. Planning Board member Wayne Burkhart advised that "although misunderstandings arise, the Planning Board must concentrate on doing its work."

And work we have! During the February 23rd Planning Board meeting, board members reviewed the language for the proposed Accessory Dwelling Unit Bylaw, as well as the wording for the definition clarifications that were proposed. Please note there will be a public hearing on Thursday, March 23, 2006, at 7 p.m. to discuss the Planning Board's items for the Warrant at the Annual Town Meeting in May. These items include proposals: to allow the construction of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU's) as a "use by right" in Monterey; to amend the definition Agricultural Use in Section II; and to add a definition for "structure" in Section VI. Footnotes.

The Planning Board proposal for ADU's is to make the construction of an Accessory Dwelling Unit a "use by right" for property owners with two acres or more that are outside the Lake Shore district. In a prior public hearing held on November 17, 2005, the Planning Board heard concerns and objections to the proposal, as well as interest and encouragement from citizens who would either like to be able construct an ADU or could see the advantages of being able to construct such a dwelling. At the November public hearing, those against the proposal cited increased traffic and congestion, increased crime, and a subversion of the two-acre zoning in the Monterey Zoning Bylaws as their reasons for opposition. Supporters of ADU's cited the need for a more diverse housing stock in Monterey and believe that the ADU proposal provides that while keeping the rural/residential character of the town intact. Pro or con, this is an important issue for the town so please attend the public hearing in the Town Offices on Thursday, March 23, at 7 p.m. and let your views be heard.

Two seats on the Planning Board are up for grabs at the elections in May. The first is the seat held by Beth King, who finished out a three-year term. Beth has made a valuable contribution and we will be sorry to lose her. But our loss can be your gain! If you have an interest in the direction of planning in Monterey, please consider running for a seat on the Planning Board. Write an open letter to the town

and the Planning Board stating your interest, and we will discuss and publicize all comers. Stephen Rose who was appointed to the seat last August currently fills the other open seat. Since he was appointed, it is necessary for Rose to run for the seat in an election. Stephen has indicated his interest in continuing to serve on the Planning Board, and he intends to run for the seat that he currently fills.

Help! The Planning Board needs help. Our wonderful secretary, Esther Heffernan, has resigned from her position. She also works at the Monterey Library and hopes to put in more time there. Once again we seek secretarial assistance. The Planning Board needs someone who can take minutes at our twice-monthly meetings, will post the approved minutes to the web in a timely manner, and will do general filing and clerical work. If you are interested in the direction of planning in Monterey, want to make a few extra bucks, and have the time to make an important contribution to our town, then this is a great way to do it. Recent estimates put the monthly hours at approximately eight hours per month. That said, we are beginning work on a master plan for Monterey, and if our budget request is approved at the Annual Town Meeting in May, more hours will be needed for clerical support. The position will pay an hourly rate that is commensurate with experience. Please direct inquiries to Maggie Leonard at 528-1170.

— Maggie Leonard

PLANNING BOARD
PUBLIC HEARING

Thursday, March 23
at 7 p.m.

Items considered for inclusion on Warrant at the Ammual Town Meeting

Accessory Dwelling Units proposal and definition amendments will be discussed.

Community Center Meeting March 9th

On Thursday, March 9, at 7:00, the Wilson McLaughlin House Committee, sometimes informally referred to around town as the Monterey Community Center Committee, will be holding a public, town-wide meeting to give all Monterey community members the opportunity to hear more details about the project and to give personal input at this all-important planning stage of the Community Center. We will be meeting in the Meetinghouse basement and plan to have an enthusiastic turnout.

It feels to me that the creation of this Monterey Community Center is starting to take on an excitement reminiscent of some historic projects from the 70s and 80s. The Monterey Lights the Way energy-saving competition, the priceless "I Love Monterey Day" parades, and the building of the new firehouse are three that come quickly to mind. In teaming up with neighbors to see how much we could reduce our total energy consumption as a town, we educated ourselves and worked together toward a common goal, having great fun along the way.

I laugh as I remember Walter Parks in an "I Love Monterey" parade waving from his perch on the back of the back seat in a red vintage Cadillac convertible. Another year's T-shirt read, "Monterey … the heavenly headwaters of the Konkapot AND where Walter is the postmaster."

I remember what it felt like (great pride and lump in the throat) to go past the new firehouse work site and see a multitude of workers all over the building donating their time. There was something very special about these projects; all involved folks from every corner of town working together in a generous, creative, non-political way. All contributed to making Monterey a dynamic place to live. This Community Center project is following in those footsteps.

This past month our Building Subcommittee has been hard at work. We mailed out a document called a Request for Proposal to fifty architects in the region. Architects interested in the project have until March 8th to respond. To date, ten architects have indicated their interest by coming to hear more about the project and walking through the Wilson house to get the preliminary information needed to create their proposals. Later in March we will be interviewing them and making a selection.

Things are moving along at quite a pace now. We have some upcoming town assessment needs/survey type work we have to do in order to collect information that will be required for many potential grant proposals. Good participation at the March 9th meeting will help us gain some direction for designing this assessment survey. See you there!

Immediate wish list: We are starting to have lots to keep track of and are wondering if anyone out there has access to a new, up-to-date laptop computer that they would like to donate (tax-deductible) to this project. The easiest way to contact us is through the e-mail link on our web site: ccmonterey.org.

— Susan Sellew

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Deadline for Town MeetingWarrant Articles

The Monterey Select Board announces that Friday, March 31st, is the deadline for submitting citizen petitions to the Board of Registrars. All warrant articles for the May 6th Annual Town Meeting must be in hand by April 3rd for submission to Town Counsel. The warrant will be signed on April 10th and sent to the printer. Ballots should be in the mail by April 17th, in plenty of time for the informational meeting on April 28th. Any questions about the process can be directed to Town Secretary Melissa Noe at the Town Offices, 528-1443.

Reminder: Pick up Those Daffodils March 24th

The daffodils that people have ordered to support cancer research should be picked up (and paid for) at the General Store on Friday, March 24th. Don't be forgeting now!

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Hootenanny Redux … and more

Attention all musicians and music lovers. The second annual Hootenanny returns to the Monterey Meetinghouse on March 10th at 7:00 p.m. for an evening of live music by local folks. Everyone, professional or amateur, is invited to perform, jam, sing along, or just listen in this revival of a great 60s tradition. Sponsored by the Monterey Cultural Council, this free event is being held because of the enthusiastic response to the last Hootenanny. In the spirit of Pete Seeger and the other acoustic greats who made the genre famous, we will once again share the spontaneity, creativity, and joy of live music on an end-of-winter's evening. Potential performers are encouraged to call Joe Baker (528-9385) or Joel Schick (528-3128) if they have questions about the evening, and as with all winter Cultural Council events, in case of bad weather, check with the church answering machine (528-5850) for cancellations and postponements.

Don't forget to mark you calendars for April 8th at 2:00 p.m. so you won't miss the Thunder Bay Ensemble. This free event will feature gamelan music, masks, and dance and is appropriate for all ages.

The Cultural Council thanks the Monterey Church for its generosity in sharing its beautiful space with the community for these programs and those of the past few months. On January 21st the sanctuary was filled with adults and children alike to hear Phil Buck speak about his fascinating explorations. Phil is building another reed boat near Boston for his next expedition and the Council is considering a bus trip this summer to see his progress. Stay tuned. Special appreciation also goes out to Monterey musician Allan Dean who came to the rescue with a magnificent impromptu trumpet concert when the speaker was late in arriving. What a treat Allan! The Council also thanks the General Store for supplying refreshments and being so supportive of all our events.

The Meetinghouse was also the site of an evening pastel workshop on Friday, February 17th, with Gregory Maichack teaching. Greg is an award-winning painter and a college teacher of fine arts as well, and his infectious enthusiasm for his medium worked wonders on the full class of fifteen students. By the end of the workshop, all had made good progress in understanding the materials and techniques, and the results we took home are exciting testimony to the possibilities we discovered. There were a few people on the waiting list for the class, so we will have to do it again next year.

These events and those coming up are sponsored in part by the Massachusetts Cultural Council and the town of Monterey. We are grateful for their support.

— Dianna Downing

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Monterey Democrats Caucus March 11th

All registered Democrats in Monterey are invited to caucus on Saturday, March 11, at 10 a.m. in the Meetinghouse basement. The purpose of the caucus will be to select and endorse candidates to run in the May 6th election for town offices.

Positions on the Board of Appeals, the Board of Assessors, the Board of Health, the Cemetery Committee, the Finance Committee, the Library Trustees, the Park Commission, the Planning Board, the Select Board, as well as the Moderator, the Town Clerk and the Tree Warden will all receive consideration for endorsement.

The participation of all Democrats in this March 11th caucus is essential for us to secure the best possible candidates to run in the May 6th election.

Anyone interested in being a candidate and being endorsed by the Democrats should please contact Muriel Lazzarini at 528-5796 or malazz@map.com.

The polls will open on May 6th at approximately 9:30 a.m. and remain open until 6:30 p.m.

Michael Storch

Monterey folks: Judy Hayes, Anne Marie Makuc, and Gige O'Connell, library stalwarts all, at Anne's retirement party last June.

Monterey Republicans Caucus March 4th

The Monterey Republican Town Committee will meet Saturday, March 4, at 1 p.m. in the Meetinghouse basement to nominate a slate for the caucus, which follows at 1:30 in the same location. The caucus will nominate candidates for the upcoming local elections in May. The following offices are up for election:

Assessor, Board of Appeals, Cemetery Committee, Town Clerk, Finance Committee, Library Trustees (2), Moderator, Park Commission (3), Planning Board (2), Select Board, and Tree Warden.

Anyone wishing the Republican nomination should write the Committee, PO Box 711, Monterey.

All registered Republicans are urged to attend the caucus at 1:30 p.m. and be a part of the local election process. Any candidates, including Democrats and Unenrolled, will be allowed to briefly address the caucus at 1:30 before the meeting is closed to all but registered Republicans.

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New Gould Farm Program Seeks Community Volunteers

At Gould Farm, a therapeutic residential farm community for adults coping with mental illness, a new programmatic emphasis is helping Gould Farm guests reconnect with their interests and future plans. As part of the new program, volunteer drivers are needed to transport Gould Farm guests to local college courses or internships.

According to Pauline Banducci, Gould Farm's new transitional support counselor, "Our guests who are coping with mental illness often interrupt their educational and career plans. As symptoms stabilize and strengths and capabilities are enhanced, many of our guests want to continue their education and work outside Gould Farm." Volunteer drivers would make a four-to-six month commitment to transport a Gould Farm guest to classes or volunteer or internship apprenticeships once a week in the local area. They will have the opportunity to make meaningful connections with a Gould Farm guest. People who volunteer can either drive their own car and get reimbursed or use a Gould Farm vehicle, when available.

Ms. Banducci has strong connections to the Berkshires. She has been associated with several nonprofit entities, including her recent position with the Berkshire Co-op Market, and has extensive experience organizing volunteers at I.S. 183 and Earth Day at the Co-op. Now, at Gould Farm, Banducci is excited about connecting community volunteers with Gould Farm guests. "We are hopeful that this will be an important experience for everyone involved."

To volunteer, contact Pauline Banducci at Gould Farm 413-528-1804, extension 31.

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Roadside Store Getting Facelift

After 27 years of operation, Gould Farm's Roadside Store and Café is undergoing a facelift. Following cosmetic interior renovations that will close the Café from March 6–18th, Roadside, the gateway to Gould Farm, will reopen on March 19th with a cozy, cheerful look and a focus on fresh local products prepared in a welcoming atmosphere. Exterior renovations will begin as soon as weather permits.

Gould Farm is a non-profit therapeutic residential farm community for adults coping with mental illness. Staff and guests care for the animals, farmland, gardens, and grounds, provide for all the common functions of the community and manage the Roadside Store and Café. Through needed work, recreation and therapy in Gould Farm's deliberately eclectic environment, guests find strength to transcend their mental health challenges and move forward in their individual recovery process. Often, work at Roadside is a transitional step in a guest's stay at Gould Farm when the guest has opportunities to take on increased responsibility and interact directly with the larger Berkshire community

Nevada Selinger and Rachel Babcock, Roadside's new managers, work with Gould Farm staff and guests to serve restaurant patrons as part of Gould Farm's work program. Both Nevada and Rachel arrived at Gould Farm from Alaska with extensive restaurant experience. Prior to her time in Alaska, Rachel lived in the Berkshires, and some natives and visitors may remember her from Kintaro Restaurant and Berkshire Coffee Roasting Company.

"Ever-changing specials will supplement the daily offerings at the Roadside Café," said Ms. Babcock. Mr. Selinger added, "There will be an increased emphasis on the use of Gould Farm products such as pesto and varieties of squash." Beginning March 19th, Roadside will be open six days a week from 7:30 to 2:30 and closed on Wednesdays. A Grand Reopening on March 31st will feature 5-cent coffee and cookies.

— Fran Wishnick

Monterey Knitting Circle Continues March 8th & 29th

There will be two meetings of the knitting circle in March, on Wednesday, March 8, and Wednesday, March 29, both from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. As usual, we will meet in the Monterey General Store, which will be closed for business but open for creativity. We've had several successful meetings, and the interest and numbers of knitters are increasing. We would like to thank Kenn Basler again for opening up the store to us.

We hope to continue opening up the world of knitting to beginning knitters as well as offering a creative camaraderie for experienced knitters. Please join us.

Gould Farm's Roadside Store & Café

Roadside will be CLOSED for renovations March 6-18th

Reopening on Sunday, March 19th

Stop by and try our daily specials!

Hours: 7:30-2:30, Closed Wednesdays

Animal Dreams to Highlight March 8th Potluck

The speaker for the Wednesday, March 8th, community potluck will be Yvonne Borsody, founder of Animal D.R.E.A.M.S (Dignified Rescues, Education, Adoptions, Medical Services). This nonprofit has helped over 800 feral, lost, and abandoned cats in Berkshire County and bordering towns over the last six years. Come and learn about cat colonies, the TNR (trap, neuter, release) method of animal control, feral behavior, and what is being done to make life easier for the forgotten felines in our communities.

The potluck begins at 6:00 p.m. in the community room at the Monterey Meetinghouse. Please bring something to share for the meal, place settings for your party, and a serving utensil for your offering. Be sure to check the church answering machine (528-5850) in case of bad weather for cancellations or postponements.

Our appreciation goes out to another of our Monterey treasures, MaryKate Jordan, for her talk, "Living the American Dream: Why Sedna Matters," at the February potluck. Thank you MaryKate.

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March Library Notes:
Library Closes March 13 for Painting

The library will be closed starting Monday March 13 for interior painting. If all goes well we should reopen Saturday March 18. In preparation for the new paint we've replaced old and yellowed light fixtures, using money from our Memorial Fund—a big thank you to all who have contributed!

Please come in and see the artwork by children in the Monterey Kindergarten. Kate Basler has been working with the class every other week, teaching them songs, reading to them, and doing fun projects. The latest project consisted of crayon and Epsom salts resist drawings. The children were treated to Valentine's cookies courtesy of the General Store while they created the drawings on display. Another thank you to Kate, who has volunteered her time and talents!

Our nine-to-twelve-year-old book discussion group will be voting March 7th for the Massachusetts Book Award, along with others of that age group across the state. We will let you know the results of the vote in Monterey as well as the state. The last book discussion included practice ad slogans for books as the children campaign for their favorites. It's not too late to get the list, read five books out of the twenty-five, and vote!

Recent Acquisitions

Adult Fiction

Accidental, Ali Smith
Just Rewards, Barbara Taylor Bradford
The Female of the Species, Joyce Carol Oates
Arthur and George, Julian Barnes
The Pale Horseman, Bernard Cornwell
Last Templar, Raymond Khoury
Cell, Stephen King
Rebels, Turn out Your Dead, Michael Drinkard
Love and Other Impossible Pursuits, Ayelet Waldman
Halfway House, Katherine Noel
Sour Puss, Rita Mae Brown
Blood Hunt, Ian Rankin
The House Of Old Wine Shades, Martha Grimes
The Last of Her Kind, Sigrid Nunez
Dinner with Anna Karenina, Gloria Goldreich
In the Company of the Courtesan, Sarah Dunant
An Imperfect Lens, Anne Roiphe

Adult Nonfiction

The Big Oyster, Mark Kurlansky
Eat, Pray, Love, Elizabeth Gilbert
Electric Universe: The Shocking True Story of Electricity, David Bodanis

Children's

The Master Spy Handbook, Rain Newcomb
The Case of the Missing Marquess, Nancy Springer
Mighty Robots, David Jones
The Homework Machine, Dan Gutman
The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane, Kate DiCamillo
Knee-deep in Blazing Snow, James Hayford

Picture Books

This Is the Dream, Diane Shore
Traction Man Is Here!, Mini Grey
The Sorcerer's Apprentice, Mary Jane Begin
Michael Rosen's Sad Book, Michael Rosen
If You Decide to Go to The Moon, Faith McNulty

— Mark Makuc

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The Mating Game

Glacial change
become rushing streams
seasons like separate lifetimes
now measured only by how much rain
or "was that the year we trimmed the old maple"

Birthdays more often
arriving on the wings of the white witch
freezing memories
commemorating fertile ages
lifetimes ago

springs ago we planted strong
offshoots now given birth to dogs
now even darker, richer, more fertile soil
… dreaming of sowing your seeds again, are we?
nothing really to stop us … only one sore elbow

prepare for re-birthing
a cup of wine raised to bare old tree tops
your hand placed on my knee for ever
there's no rockin' chair in our future, Babe
just plenty o' rocks fo' sure.

Rock on!

— Bob Hirsch
(for Lee)

Peatfire

The flaring of the fire
to the Father Sun
from this peat
on this hearth
in this cot
in this cold
in this dark
of this heart

the flaring of the fire
to the Father Sun
even this peat
even this hearth
even this cot
even this night
even this cold
even this dark
leaps out to tell my aching heart
lifting flame goes back to flame
all is Other
all is One.

— A. O. Howell

March in the Berkshires

While chill north winds wail down the chimney flue
And everything is blanketed in white
We watch the clouds play tag across the blue.
At end of day the sky's majestic hue
An artist would delight.

Soon now will come the long-awaited spring;
The snow will disappear and green grass grow,
Across the fields the songs of birds will ring,
The air will no more have its frosty sting
And streams will swiftly flow.

Small crocuses will lift their faces bright
Though snow still lingers on the wooded hill;
Young cowslip leaves unfold in morning light,
And peepers' chorused voices greet the night
When all around is still.

— Eleanor Kimberley

Letter from College
Living Out a Dream

I admire people who dream above and beyond. We owe many of our greatest accomplishments to men and women who pushed the limits. When I was growing up I was content in my little world, but as I got older I began dreaming as well. I dreamed about going to Harvard and becoming a lawyer. That would be about twenty-five to thirty years down the road, and I didn't think much about the years in between. Once in high school, I started wondering exactly how I was going to achieve my ambitions. It seemed impossibly far off from where I was as a freshmen in the new and often scary world of academics. When the admissions representative from Harvard came to our school when I was a junior, the dream to go there briefly lived again. Then I realized that I was chasing something that didn't seem appropriate for me, I no longer wanted that. I needed to focus on the years in between and what place would help me grow as a person. Now I'm at Middlebury and I can't imagine a better fit. Despite the minor stumbling blocks that are occasionally in the path, I've finally gotten into the college groove.

This spring is proving to be a busy one. Firstly my academic classes all hold my attention for different reasons. My Geopolitics in the Middle East class is causing me to learn about the importance of the Middle East beyond its political turmoil. Geography is in a simple outline the study of what makes a region unique. My political science class, American Foreign Policy, is the class I came to college for. It's taught by an incredible, inspired, and brilliant professor who won my adoration the moment she opened her mouth. The topics we cover and the connections she pushes us to make cause my head to hurt and yet I walk out of her classroom feeling as though I'm a better person for it. My Introduction to Archeology class is an indulgent class that I'm taking because I've always loved history and because the angle in the class is about learning what objects can tell us about cultures and who we are. Going hand in hand with that is my Earthquakes and Volcanoes class. The depth in which we're exploring the beginnings of our planet and the connections we draw through to today are a combination that allows me to have a better understanding of what a phenomenon it is that we can exist here on earth.

In addition to academic classes, I'm enjoying preparing for an Irish step-dancing show, helping put together a symposium for Americans for Informed Democracy in April focused on the eight millennium goals (http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/), and keeping up with our Roosevelt policy group, which just completed our policy initiative on Cuba and is now preparing a panel discussion for the symposium. Finally, I'm merging into the Ultimate Frisbee team for a little variety and exercise as well as a chance to meet new people and try something totally new.

As I plunge into these new worlds and learn about how people put on events, play team sports, keep up with insane amounts of reading, and take the time to try new things, I'm slowly beginning to realize that I belong here amongst smart people who thrive on sharing their knowledge and students who can't wait to seize the day. High school and all education prior to college are preparing you for what awaits. I didn't always love high school, but I accepted it. Only now am I realizing that a great deal of what is taught is not necessarily to inspire, although it can, nor to challenge, although if often does. It is there to give you a springboard.

The dream may have changed a little, but I always hoped I would find a place that would enable me to stretch my wings in every direction. I'm here and I do feel that college is not just school for me, nor is it solely means to an end; rather it's where I wanted to be since I was young. I've been so blessed in my life and now I get to live out my dream.

— Tarsi Dunlop

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Bidwell House Will Feature Colonial Lifeways in 2006

On Saturday, August 5th, at 2:30 p.m., local musician and plant specialist John Root will lead a walk in the woods at the Bidwell House and provide a hands-on demonstration of wild edible plants. At 1:00 p.m. on the same day, Root will entertain visitors with a sing-along featuring old-time music from the gaslight era. The event is sponsored by the Monterey Cultural Council. Mr. Root's interest in preserving knowledge of the land and its resources coincides with the main goal of the Bidwell House Museum in 2006: to re-create survival skills of the colonial era. Mr. Root is aptly named. His demonstration will leave his audience with identification skills and useful applications, including food and healing recipes.

In August, the Bidwell's Colonial Garden will be in bloom. Longtime gardening specialist Ann Hanchett has moved to a new community, and in her place the Board of Directors has retained the leadership services of Ruth Green. Also aptly named, Green will create a typical kitchen garden reminiscent of the needs of our colonial forefathers and mothers.

In June 1950, *Antiques Magazine* featured a pictorial demonstration of dye making, principally from New England plants and trees. Written by L. M. A. Roy of Henniker, New Hampshire, the "Old-Time Methods of Dyeing" article provides basic information to re-create recipes for dyes that could be followed by anyone able to identify woodland vegetation.

Mrs. Roy's information was taken principally from an 1830 book, *The Frugal House Wife,* published in Boston by a woman identified only as Mrs. Child. The book not only had 500 recipes for dyes, it also came with samples of tufts of wool dyed using formulas that resulted in a range of colors. "Light colors are to be steeped in brass, tin or earthenware; dark ones in iron," said Childs. To make yellow, she recommends fustic (a small dioecious tropical American tree) boiled in soft water, saffron, barberry, peach leaves, or onion skins. The colonial housewife saved rusty nails because when added to vinegar they produced a good black dye. The Tyringham Shaker community was making hand-wrought nails as their major subsistence until nails were mass-produced around the 1850s.

Re-creating past skills requires a return to vocabulary that is foreign to us now. To "strike" is to set the color; to "sadden" red is to give it a violet hue; to make the red into orange, you would be "rouzing" the red. Mrs. Roy said the most common "mordant" (to set the color, from the Latin "to bite or take hold") was potash alum but "copperas" (sulfate of iron or copper water) was used for darker colors. To brighten colors, she recommended alum, cream of tartar or tin.

We can be sure the women who lived in the Bidwell House gathered and prepared vegetable materials for dyes. Traveling peddlers or a visit to a more populated town, like Hartford, to find an apothecary would supply dye materials not found in the Berkshires, such as indigo (shrubs or herbs in the pea family to make blue), madder (the root of the southwest Asian perennial to make red),cochineal (dried and pulverized bodies of female insects), logwood (heartwood of a spiny tropical American tree to make a purple-red) and the mordants. Depending on the part of the tree used, some of the local trees provided dyes that produced different colors each season.

Butternut trees are local walnut trees and could produce twelve hues (Confederate uniforms were dyed with butternut extract and the soldiers were given the nickname "Butternuts"). If a housewife used the berries of the sumac (shrubs or small trees with a hairy red berry; the genus includes poison ivy and poison oak) the dye was blue; sumac leaves produced green, and shavings of the bark resulted in a yellow-green.

The earliest quilt in the Bidwell collection dates to the Revolutionary War; it is a whole-cloth quilt in a rich indigo blue. The color was made by dissolving

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one part of powdered indigo to four parts of sulfuric acid. An 1815 book, *The Dyers Companion* by Elijah Bemus, lists twelve shades possible from indigo powder.

The women of the late colonial and early republican era knew how to dye one color on top of another. "Crimson over medium blue gave wine, scarlet over brown reddish-brown, light blue over brown gave dark brown," Mrs. Roy reports. Her pictorial essay shows the gathering of sumac branches to make gray, slate, and black dye and then boiling it in an iron kettle to extract the color, adding a copperas mordant.

Carpet rugs had to be wound on a hand reel called a niddy-noddy before dyeing. The recipe described the exact measurement of mordant used, and this was weighed on a home scale. Oak nut galls (a swelling produced on an oak or other tree by parasitic wasps) were pulverized with a wooden mortar and dissolved in hot water with copperas and sumac to make black dye. Before putting yarn into the dye, it had to be weighed on a steelyard (a balance with a scaled arm and a hook on which to hang an object, and a counterbalance that could be moved to find the right weight) so that the right amount of mordant could be used. Rags were dyed in an iron kettle suspended from the crane in the fireplace. A dye stick was used for stirring and for lifting the material from the dye bath to check the color. More boiling produced a deeper color.

The final steps were rinsing several times in cold water, wringing it out, and hanging to dry. The mighty clothespin was not invented until 1850 by a Vermonter, David M. Smith. For one hundred years the Bidwell House women over three generations did not have the help of a clothespin, which was patented in the US from 1852 to 1887. Fascinating models of a clothespin can be seen on the outstanding web site of the Smithsonian; go to www.simthsonianlegacies.si.edu/objectdescription. If you would like to help us preserve southern Berkshire heritage and volunteer in the museum, the grounds, or the garden, please call 413-528-6888.

— Martha L. Dailey
Director, Bidwell House Museum

Michael Storch

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From the Meetinghouse . . .

And the servants of the householder came and said to him, "Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?" He answered, "An enemy has done this." The servants said to him, "Then do you want us to go and gather them?" But he replied, "No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them."

— Matthew 13:27–29

One day midweek last fall, I came into the meetinghouse by the side door, and I knew immediately—there's a bird stuck in here, that whistling and rustling is too loud to have come from outside. And so there was—a bird beating itself against the lowest pane in the upstairs window in my office. Not yet consciously looking for it, I saw it there when I went upstairs to search my bookshelf for something. It was huddled against the pane in such a way that, were I to open the window that opens downward and disappears behind the lower of the double-hung panes, I would have decapitated it in my attempt to set it free—killing the good, as it were, like the servants of that master, in trying to do good. And as I struggled to figure out how to set this struggling bird free, I saw Steve Pullen pull into the parking place just below the window. I ran downstairs and called him; he came upstairs; and in a matter of moments the bird flew away.

This was the second time in recent memory that a bird had found its way into the sanctuary. The first, which I wrote about in this column last summer, was in the middle of Sunday worship a couple years ago. The window was open only about six inches, but this was wide enough for the bird to find its way in as if with some purpose, zipping low, then soaring suddenly high overhead, then coming to perch on the "modesty panel" in front of the pews. Facing the congregation now, the bird commanded more attention than I could ever hope to from the pulpit. We all looked to it as if it might begin to preach, perhaps from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, "Consider the lilies of the field; consider the birds of the air . . ." But then as suddenly as it had joined us, it was off, taking wing from the modesty panel to the window up front by the organ. It slammed itself hard into the glass. The congregation at once gasped. And then all was still—the bird on the floor stunned but alive, the congregation pinned to the pews, and me gripping the pulpit. Then the bird took off again, slamming into the glass again. And then wordlessly we all looked to Steve Snyder, who stood up, took off his shirt and covered the anxious bird in its folds to take the whole bundle to the front doors where he set the bird free.

It is a lovely coincidence that the Holy Spirit of God is manifest in many stories of scripture as a bird, this Holy Spirit that is said to have been God's partner in the act of creating the world, God's cohort in the unfolding of history, and indeed the mother of the church, having breathed life into this body of believers following the Resurrection of Christ. In short, the Holy Spirit is understood as the Spirit of God at work in the world.

Sadly, there is an element amidst the church that seems no longer to believe in God's manifest power. I am often surprised at how frequently those who proclaim faith in God are scandalized by the world. Religious Christians often take offense at movies and books and TV programs and video games; many recoil at secular culture as if we feared it truly had the power to eradicate the work of God in our midst; some reject science because research using the scientific method is not necessarily done in the name of God. Often we act as if no other time has been as overrun with weeds as our time and as if it is too great a job even for God to nurture wheat among all that we perceive as weeds. This is done in the name of faith, but it is in fact an expression of fear.

And in this fearful response to the world around us, we grant the world fearsome power. But the task of people of faith is precisely the opposite: not to be scandalized, not to be offended, not to fear, and for God's sake not to pull up all that has been planted as if we can so clearly and easily tell the difference between wheat and weeds. No, the task of those who seek to walk in God's way is more simply to hope that God is no less at work in the world now than ever before, and likewise to work in that hope.

We speak of hope as if it were the same as wishing—the sort of thing that comes true if you blow your birthday candles out

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all in one breath. We speak of hope as if it were related to optimism—that great American tradition of unshakable confidence in human ingenuity and resilience and goodness, in the progress of history, and most of all in Americans and America. But hope is something deeper and truer and more transformative than either of these. As the Reverend Guy Sales wrote, "Hope is not utopian future unrelated to the vagaries of the past and ambiguities of the present; it is a future in which God redeems history, establishes justice, and brings peace. Hope is not wholeness unacquainted with brokenness; it is brokenness made whole by grace. Embodied by the risen but eternally scarred Jesus, hope always bears the marks of prior wounding and walks into the future on legs once paralyzed by fear. Hope at once embraces suffering and insists that suffering will not have the last word. Hope is a paradox: exaltation and obedience, comfort and protest, mercy and justice, promise and straining after the promise as the kingdom that is at hand is as well yet to come."

This is the life work of those who profess faith in God: that yet as the creation of God may seem like an unattended, even abandoned garden, overrun by weeds, so first and foremost we hope, setting that thing of which Emily Dickenson wrote—that thing with feathers perching in our souls, setting this free to fly into the world where it will.

— Elizabeth Goodman

Glynis Oliver

Green Corner
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Everyone knows that recycling is good for the environment, but do you know why? Imagine a forest of 30 million trees. A forest that size produces the newsprint Americans throw away in a year. Recycling newspapers, junk mail, and office paper preserves forests. Paper manufactured from other paper also reduces air pollution by 74% and water pollution by 35%. Moreover, a ton of recycled paper saves 380 gallons of oil. These are some of the resources that are needed to manufacture paper without recycled content.

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Recent Trips: The Ladder, the Mud, the Broken Heart

In the past month I have been lucky enough to take three winter trips out of my usual haunts. Although they have involved three different planes, they required no tickets, no beach gear, and only minimal security clearance. These were not the kind of planes that lift off from the tarmac and come down again miles away, taking you first to heavenly immortality, and then back past fatal possibilities every time you land. I did get up in the air and I had a rocky landing from which I have not yet recovered, but there was no airplane.

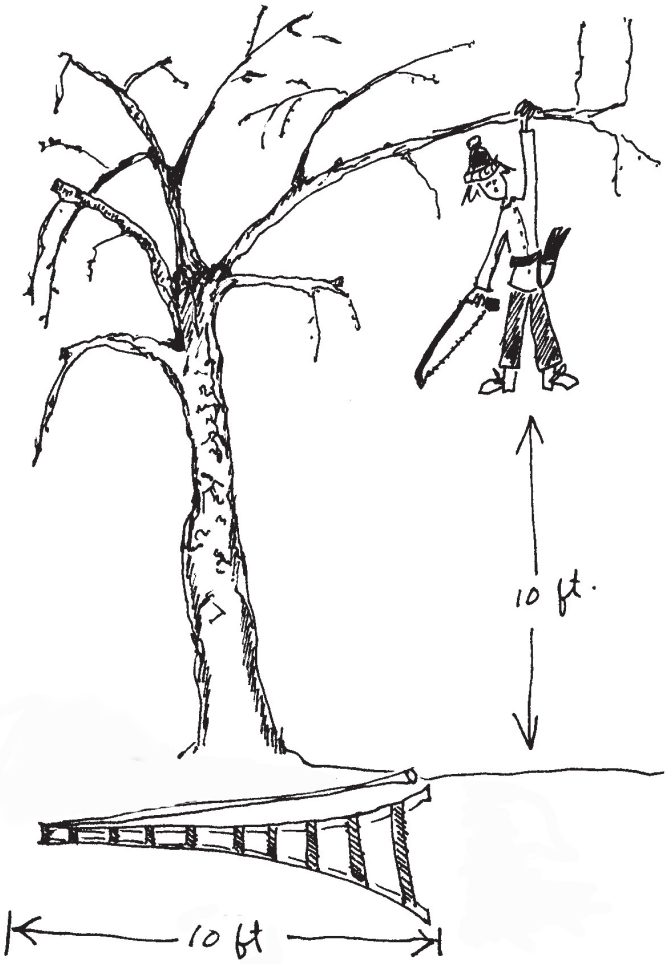
The first trip I'll mention is the mud one. I had lots of company, age eight, and the trip was originally billed as "Snowshoeing and Winter Tracks." In fact, we hit a thaw and a deluge, and what we got was a sodden school playing field and a muddy floodplain, perfect for tracks. The kids, third-graders in Hillsdale, New York, had been promised snowshoes. Mostly they had remembered to dress for outdoors, so they hit the soggy terrain in colorful ski attire, what we used to call snowpants. By the end of the afternoon they were in monochrome earth tones, so many times had they gotten intimate with the land. Up on the grassy ballfield the slides and tumbles were optional, but numerous. Down in the creek bottom, where I had staked out the bobcat tracks for them to admire, we all had trouble staying upright.

Class after class wound its way through the hawthorns and brambles to the place I'd marked, to see four perfect cat tracks in fresh mud. All those boots working the clay, slithering up and down the little banks of the small creek runnels. By the end of the day it was like glue. I looked back at one point and there at the end of the line were the classroom teacher and Dana, not making forward progress.

"Are you okay?"

(Laughter) "Yes! Don't wait for us—we're coming in a minute."

Turns out Dana had both feet so stuck that she couldn't move. An attempt to lift one foot had unbalanced her and she'd gone down in the stickum, tar-baby style. Her teacher got her out, though, and they both emerged completely mudded up, to the cheers of the rest of the class.



What keeps these young people jolly? It was cold out there. They were a mess. With such a big crowd it was tough for them to count the toes in the raccoon prints, see the details where several deer had bounded across the infield, toes spread and dew-claws showing. There were no snowshoes, no snow. And yet all these children were making the best of it with no visible effort, even the ones with no hats and pink ears.

I thought about them as I was driving home, coming down to earth in the privacy of my car, and then every day as I rejoined another trip I am on just now: the heartbreak of dog-loss. I think it is really the General Loss Trip, since it feels so familiar. I have been on board this one for nearly a month, and from this distance I look at my life, my community with new eyes. I am tender for animals, including people, feeling our mortality—both individual and collective. I am holding gratitude and wistfulness at the same time, joy and sorrow. How did we get so lucky as to be born onto this planet? Then what happened, to determine that we would be the ones to destroy it and each other? And then, some poetic justice gives us and only us the burden of the long view. Give me a break! Give me third grade, mud, and raccoon toes.

Or give me a ladder. I actually *bought* myself a ladder a few weeks ago, before the dog died. I have been moving it around the orchard, even in the snow, loving the boost it gives me. Climbing trees from the ground, tools hanging from my belts, has become harder than it used to be. It's partly

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that the trees have gotten tall in thirtty years but it's also certain changes in me over that time. (My creeping mortality, in the form of tricky knees.) So I had been shying away from Deep Pruning, certain kinds of aerial twisting. Now I set up my ladder and head for the crown. I am ten feet up. I can step off into the top of the Northern Spy and tame its water sprouts, redirect its efforts to be a tall tree. This is grand! Up in the sun with the wind and the ravens.

For seven years I've enjoyed one dog companion. She was especially present for pruning, pouncing on the branches as they came down, giving them a good thrashing and some redistribution. Since she died last month I have been lonely on my ladder, conscious always of the newly filled hole under the Jonathan. Ruby is there, but she is not there. Last week I was way up in the air, reaching too far, when the ladder went out from under me. I hung one-handed for a second before I had to let go. In that instant I gave myself up, quit "pushing the river," bossing the way things grew. I landed rough, with a big grunt that told me I was still alive. For awhile it was good to lie there looking through the branches to the sky.

The third grader in me was laughing; the heart, though broken, thumping. I hobbled up and reset the ladder right away, because there is more pruning left for me to do, more trips to take with my new respect for balance and gravity. I will be glad to keep taking these trips, as long as I can come back laughing, crying, respectful.

— Bonner J. McAllester

Brush Burning Permits

Open burning is allowed in some Massachusetts towns, including Monterey, subject to certain requirements and responsibilities issued and enforced by the State Fire Marshals Office, DEP, and your local Fire Department. These guidelines include the following:

- Permits can be obtained from January 15 to April 30.
- You must obtain a permit for open burning from the Monterey Fire Department by calling 528-1734.
- Residents must call on the day they will be burning; no permits are issued ahead of time. The permit is good for one day only.
- Burning hours start at 10 a.m. and all fires must be out by 4 p.m.
- Burning materials will be confined to brush only. All other materials are prohibited.
- Burning piles must be kept small and controllable.
- No burning within 75 ft. of a building.
- Have a method of extinguishment and tools available.
- Never leave the fire unattended for any reason.
- Permits are issued weather permitting. Burning is not allowed every day.
- Don't wait until the end of April; you will be disappointed if you wait till the last minute. The burning season will not be extended.

Make sure you call for a permit at 528-1734 and leave your name, the address of where you are burning, and a phone number.

Dual Homeowners Corner

The sun is shining brightly In Montclair, and the sky is bright blue and cloudless. The snow is melting, and the grass is peeking through the cracks in the ice. We are talking about going to Monterey.

While reading the *Monterey News,* I am thinking about the April 19th potluck supper and looking at the trees that have been planted near Route 23. The Hootenanny at the Meetinghouse sounds wonderful, the plans for the Community Center are exciting, and the Bidwell House Museum sounds interesting, as does the camaraderie provided in the Monterey Knitting Circle. These are all enticements to return to our special, cozy home in the Berkshires very soon and to become involved in all of the activities.

During a recent visit to Boston to see part of our family, one of our granddaughters told us that she, and one of her friends is planning to spend some time at Camp Half Moon this summer in addition to her regular visit with us. As grandparents, we are gratified that our children and grandchildren have formed a special connection to the cottage and Lake Buel. This is another confirmation of how significant the time she has spent with us at the lake has been. We are enriched by this demonstration of her accepting Monterey as her home also. We think of ourselves as members of this wonderful community, and we are planning to be there as soon as possible.

— Barbara Haver

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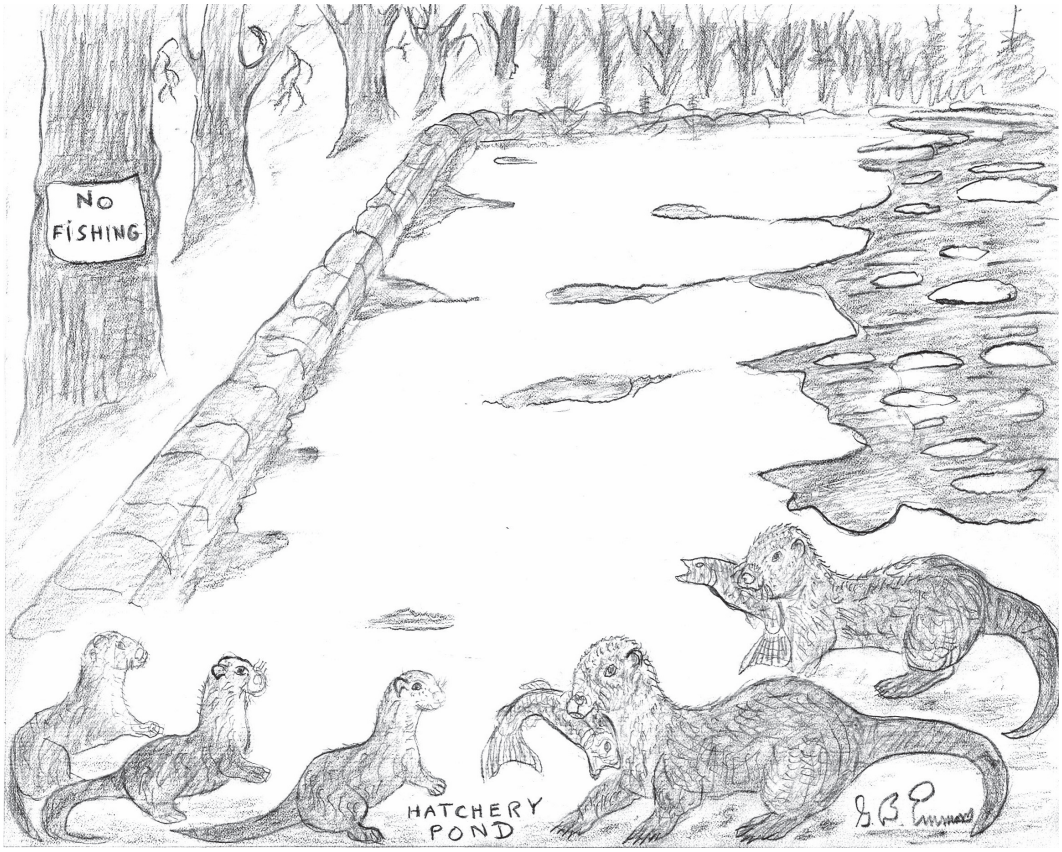
Ice Out: Sun Sign of the Otter



Only three weeks until spring! We have watched the melting and then freezing one more time, a daily progression of ice out, coming on with three steps forward and then two backward. At the Berkshire Trout Hatchery, the surface transformation is seen and heard, coming down the ravines of Dry Hill, which looks down upon the complex of buildings and canvas-covered pools. But from the aquifer under the earth, perhaps half a mile down, high quality 48-degree water has been forced up by hydrostatic pressure, into the artesian well halfway up the hill, providing the gravity flow for raising fish all winter long. In with the new, and out with the old!

Feeding trout and salmon under frozen and snowy pens is not that vital every day, because their metabolisms are in a reduced state. However, daily observation is essential to check water levels and signs of stress in the fish, particularly when tracks of otters, mink, and even a weasel tell a tale of visitors in the night. The covers on the pools, surrounded by chain link fences, have warded off predators, but the raceway and lower pond along River Road have lost some of the larger trout. This is to be expected, especially when the usual suspect is a river otter, which can eat about one-quarter of its body weight every day, digests a fish in less than an hour, ready for another, and can catch any fish it wants in open water.

After breeding in winter, otters usually have two or three pups in spring, but once in a while a bred female for some reason may have a delayed implantation, so that gestation can last up to eleven months. When that happens, parturition may take place any time from November to May. At least one entrance to the den is usually hidden under water, and the otters' slides down the bank are the most visible trace of their presence.

For most of us, otters are held in high esteem for their environmental value, unless you value your fish inventory more. However, they are a protected species, and a special state permit is required to remove them. We have decided not to go this route, as yet. There are more trout where these came from, as our rainbows will be ready to spawn during the coming season of renewal. It is that time of year.

And there is more promising news. The hatchery is in meetings and discussions with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife to sign a memorandum of understanding that will project the near term and future operation, with the hope that The Western Center For Aquaculture will also renew state funds in June. The miracle of the hatchery rising up again like a phoenix out of the ashes is in tune with what all fishermen treasure as the sun sign of ice out, perhaps the harbinger of vernal pools and the vernal equinox. It is a symphony of running water, dripping gutters to the drumbeat of nuthatches pecking for insects, bright rings of water, and flashes of fins. The hatchery's setting is a gem, a place where "so much is owed by so many, to so few." If you are of a mind to join the celebration, please send a tax-deductible donation of any amount to: Berkshire Hatchery Foundation, P.O. Box 84, Monterey, MA 01245.

— George Emmons

CHARLES J. FERRIS
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Thinking about a Dog?

One of the key questions to ask when purchasing a puppy is "What do I want from this pet for the next 10–15 years of my life?" And, more importantly, "What is the level of time and commitment available for bringing up and training this pet?" Too often we buy our new "family members" impulsively or out of some sentimental longing to repeat a past relationship with a perfect dog now long gone. All of us are familiar with sad stories of Christmas puppies, purchased in a moment of holiday enthusiasm and gift giving that turn into mud magnets come spring and adolescent hell raisers by summer. These are often pure bred and expensive pets sheepishly turned over to the shelters or advertised with the giveaway tag line "needs plenty of room to exercise." This is code for "Spot is 7 months old, around 90 pounds, and is guaranteed to wreak havoc in your house because his family never trained or socialized him." In other words, good luck and batten the hatches!

The recent engaging and poignant bestseller *Marley* describes the tumultuous family life of a very hyperactive impulsive and destructive lab and his unsuspecting owners, a young couple trying out the familiar course of raising a puppy before the time comes to master the art of human baby raising. Marley is a whole lot more dog than they bargained for. The owner-author admits that he chose this puppy with little regard for the breed-specific qualities of a strong, energetic, always "on" sporting dog. Poor Marley doesn't fit into the quiet suburban life of this family and spends the next decade struggling to please his loved ones with very little help from them, as well meaning as they are, or from the professionals they hire to help them control their whirling dervish. Marley is incredibly resilient and loving and hangs in there in spite of being locked up, strangled by choke chains, and yelled at uncounted times. His commitment to his family never wavers and he finally dies a well-loved old dog, believe it or not. And, his owners have the gift of insight, thanks to him; they know what to look for when they go dog-shopping next and carefully assess personality and other attributes before they buy.

So, the lesson is? Your dog will probably be with you longer than the new car you purchase this year. He will require a LOT of time and attention during his first year, especially during his first six months, to turn out right. You will get from him what you put into him. First, get the dog that is right for you—big or little, active or quiet, hairy or short haired. Don't fall in love with that puppy until you consider all the possibilities: do I have time for him? Who will be responsible for him? Where will I train him? What are the rules of the house and who will enforce them? Are the kids old enough to really do the job, or will it fall on me? Then, if all the questions are answered affirmatively, go for it. The right puppy coming into your life at the right time will contribute immeasurably to the fun and happiness of your household. After all, they really truly understand us and our limitations and they usually forgive us and love us in spite of ourselves!

— Nora Hayes

Upon My Word!

You'd be surprised at how hidden yet present the ancient gods are to us in Monterey. We can start with the days of the week:

Monday = Moonday; Fr. *lundi,* for the goddess of the moon.

Tuesday = Tyrsday (Norse god for Mars); Fr. *mardi*.

Wednesday = Wotan's day (Norse god for Mercury); Fr. *mercredi*.

Thursday=Thor's day (Norse god for Jupiter); It. *giovedi* (Jove).

Friday = Freya's day (Norse goddess for Venus); Fr. *vendredi*.

Saturday (Roman god Saturnus).

Sunday = God's day; Fr. *dimanche* (Lat. *deus*).

As you can guess the planets were also named for deities. And then there's Tyringham. Monterey used to be part of that village. The Norse suffix *ing* means "people of" and *ham* means "village," as in a "hamlet," so we can assume that it means the village of the people of Tyr. Torrington, Connecticut, is the village of the people of Thor. Both towns are named for their English counterparts.

— A. O. Howell

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Highland Community Initiative Events

Chapter 61: Understanding The First Refusal Option
Thursday March 2, 7 p.m., Shelburne Buckland Community Center, 53 Main St., Shelburne Falls

In this workshop, attorney Richard Evans will clarify the legal requirements, timelines, and issues surrounding the first refusal option under the Chapter 61 program. Select Boards, Conservation Commissions, and Open Space Committees will learn how and when to utilize their first refusal option, and landowners enrolled in Chapter 61 will gain a better understanding of how this aspect of the law affects their land. The fee is $5 per person (free to Trustees of Reservations members), pre-registration required. For information or to register call 413-268-8219 or email jchristensen@ttor.org.

Conservation Connections Series: Landscape Conservation: People, Protection and Prosperity
Monday March 6, 7 p.m., Conway Grammar School

The Highland Communities Initiative and Conway School of Landscape Design will sponsor a talk by Glenn Eugster, Assistant Regional Director with the National Park Service in Washington, D.C., exploring the numerous impacts of landscape-scale land conservation. Eugster has worked for more than thirty years locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally, with NPS and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, helping communities and park managers regenerate economies and landscapes. Free.

Contributors

We thank the following folks for their contributions; it is readers like you who make it possible for us to continue publishing. We know our readers receive requests from many worthy organizations for financial help and are grateful that you include the *Monterey News* in your giving.

Eleanor Kimberley
Berkshire Hatchery Foundation
Ian & Christa Lindsay
Nancy Kalodner

Michael Storch

Monterey folks: (l. to r.) Gary Shaw, John Higgins, Laurie, Emily, and Andrew Shaw.

Thursday Night Music at the Monterey General Store

Avoid the late winter blahs and prepare for mud season. Come to the Monterey General Store on Thursday nights for music, warmth, good food, and more music. The music goes from 7:00 to 9:00, with no cover charge. Light dinner is available from 6:00–7:30. For more information, call the store, 413-528-4437

March 2
Joel Schick,
with special guest Vikki True
March 9
Bobby Sweet
March 16
Bob Dunn
March 23
Bruce Mandel
March 30
Steve Adams

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kmayer8@attglobal.net

Calendar

Every Monday (exc. holidays): Select Board meeting, 8:30 a.m.–noon, Town Offices.

Thursday, March 2: Music at the General Store, 7–9 p.m. with Joel Schick and Vikki True.

Saturday, March 4: Monterey Republican Town Committee caucus, 1 p.m., Meetinghouse basement. See p. 9.

March 6–18: Roadside Store and Café closed for interior renovations; reopens March 19. See p. 10.

Wednesday, March 8:

Monterey Knitting circle, 6–7:30 p.m., General Store. All are welcome.

Community Potluck, with speaker Yvonne Borsody, founder of Animal D.R.E.A.M.S (Dignified Rescues, Education, Adoptions, Medical Services). Meetinghouse Fellowship Hall, 6 p.m. See p. 11.

Thursday, March 9:

Free blood pressure clinic, 2–3 p.m., Town Offices, administered by Visiting Nurses Assoc.

Music at the General Store, 7–9 p.m. with Bobby Sweet.

Wilson McLaughlin House Committee will hold public, town-wide meeting to give details about the Community Center project and to receive community input. 7:00 p.m., Meetinghouse basement. See p. 7.

Friday, March 10: Hootenanny, an evening of live music by local folks, returns to the Monterey Meetinghouse, 7:00 p.m. Free, sponsored by Monterey Cultural Council. See p. 8.

Saturday, March 11: Monterey Democratic Party caucus, 10 a.m., Meetinghouse basement. See. p. 9.

Monday, March 13–Wednesday, March 15: Monterey Library closed for interior painting (reopens on Saturday, March 18 if all goes well).

Tuesday, March 14: Full Moon.

Thursday, March 16: Music at the General Store, 7–9 p.m. with Bob Dunn.

Monday, March 20: Quarterly informational meeting, 7 p.m., Town Hall. Discussion of Prop. 2½, led by Jon Sylbert of Select Board and Town Accountant Barbara Gauthier.

Thursday, March 23:

Public Meeting to discuss Monterey Planning Board's proposed zoning bylaw changes to be put on the Warrant for the Annual Town Meeting in May. Town Offices, 7 p.m. See p. 6.

Music at the General Store, 7–9 p.m. with Bruce Mandel.

Friday, March 24: Pick-up day for daffodils ordered to support cancer research, Monterey General Store.

Saturday, March 25: Square and contra dancing, 8:30–11:30 p.m., Sheffield Grange, Rt. 7, Sheffield. Music by Mountain Laurel. Caller Sarah Gregory Smith. All dances are taught; beginners and children are welcome. Adults $6, children $3. Information 528-9385.

Wednesday, March 29: Monterey Knitting circle, 6–7:30 p.m., General Store. Al are welcome.

The Observer
January 26–February 25

High temp. (2/17)	58°
Low temp. (2/19. 20)	4°
Avg. high temp.	35°
Avg. low temp.	16.4°
Avg. temp.	25.7°
Total precipitation (rain and melted snow)	2.76 in.
Snowfall	15.2 in.
Total snowfall for season	55.4 in.

Precipitation occurred on 24 days.

Thursday, March 30: Music at the General Store, 7–9 p.m. with Steve Adams.

Friday, March 31: Deadline for submission of citizen petitions to include articles on Annual Town Meeting warrant. See p. 8.

Peter S. Vallianos
Attorney at Law
528-0055

General practice includes real estate purchases, sales, family transfers and transfers in trust, zoning, land use matters, conservation restrictions, landlord-tenant; wills, probate; commercial law.

***

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Contributions from local artists this month:
Maureen Banner, pp. 15, 19, 23; George Emmons, p. 20; Bonner McAllester, p. 18.

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